

Good Afternoon everyone, Donna and I want to thank you for being here today and welcome you to the Mansion. We're going to sign several bills from the regular session including some that were key pieces of my administration's legislative package and I want to especially thank all of the authors, the supporting legislators, members of the community like folks who are here today who advocated for these bills and help make this day possible. But before we start signing the bills, I would want to mention a couple of things about some of the legislation. First, Raise the Age, this bill will make a critical and long overdue difference in the lives of our children and provide many of them the opportunity that they were once denied. A great deal of passion went into this legislation not just from the bills' author and members of legislature but really from people of all ages and many professions all across the state of Louisiana. But I want to especially thank the leadership of Senator JP Morrell from New Orleans for championing this bill and for Representative Sherman Mack since I mentioned New Orleans, I'll mention Sherman Mack from Albany for carrying it in the House of Representatives. Many of the APIs, advocacy groups, and members of the community are here today who fought very hard to make sure that this legislation was passed and it is a down payment on comprehensive criminal justice reform that you will see in a much bigger way next year. But those people include the Urban League, the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights, the Institute of Public Health and Justice, the Southern Poverty Law Center and we have three young people with us today who certainly made passing this bill a priority; they are Christina Griffiths, Sean Kelly and Dante Hills. As you know, Raise the Age was a key part of my legislative agenda and I'm proud to have the opportunity to sign it into law today. Until today, Louisiana was one of only nine states that excluded all 17 year olds from the juvenile justice system even for the most minor nonviolent offenses and this bill then I'm signing does not affect the DA's, the district attorneys, I should say, ability to prosecute certain youth as adults for serious offenses, rather raising the age means holding young people accountable for their actions in age appropriate settings. So the default rule will be that 17 year olds can be treated as a juvenile. If there are compelling reasons that lead the district attorney to use it in his or her discretion to treat the individual as an adult that will happen but that will be the exception. The rule is that 17 year olds will be treated as juveniles. Why is that important? We now know so much more about human development, especially brain development than we did over a hundred years ago when this law went into effect that it's time that we make a change to accommodate what we now know as a matter of science that these children have not fully developed their brains they are certainly capable of changing their lives and this is just a recognition of this but most importantly it's about not giving up on our children. I believe every child has the potential to succeed as long as they are given the opportunity to do so. So do we don't want to needlessly withhold that opportunity for my children. Secondly, the Real ID this is the bill I'll be signing. In 2005 after 9-11, the Real ID Act was enacted by Congress to establish minimum standards and requirements for the issuance and production of state issue driver's licenses and identification cards and by 2020 every air traveler will need identification that complies with the Real ID standards in order to get on an airplane. Now it is true, this bill passed the legislature previously but it was vetoed by my predecessor. Obviously, I voted for the bill while I was in the legislature, I'm happy to sign it today and I want to thank Representative Jimmy Harris and Terry Landry as well as Senators Colome I'm sorry, Senator Colomb and Commissioner Karen Saint-Germain as well as the Office of Motor Vehicles staff who worked tirelessly to provide citizens the ability to meet federal requirements of Real ID in order to travel and enter federal facilities. Now those individuals in Louisiana who still have an objection to Real ID need not get a real ID compliant card if they don't want to that will be their option

should they choose to exercise that option, however, they will need two forms of identification in order to board an airplane. On the education bills I want to tell you that we had some success this year contrary to what many members of the press have said. Finally I'll be signing into law, several bills focused on smart education reforms that help restore local control over how are children are educated and how our tax dollars are spent. Obviously accountability and oversight are critical, Senate Bill 260 by Senator Blade Morrish and House Bill 98 by Representative Pat Smith remove the authority of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to certify groups as local charter authorizers thus limiting the establishment of charter schools to local school boards or BESE. Now we don't need local charter authorizers because we have them they're called school boards and if school board which holds that authorization then there is an ability for these entities to appeal that decision to BESE. This ensures that the authority is vested in an elected body that is held accountable by the voters and taxpayers and not by a non-elected unaccountable third-party entity. Also Senate Bill 477 by Senators Boudreaux and Appel Bishop, Milkovich, Morrish, Walsworth, White and Representatives Hall and Price provide multiple measures for student of student growth and teacher evaluations where that value added component is going to be reduced from fifty percent to thirty-five percent which is much more consistent with best practices around the nation. This is not only about regaining local control, it is about valuing our teachers based on more than just expensive, excessive, standardized tests and overrides of those results. So as you can see, these are some very important pieces of legislation that were part of our overall package when I look back on the regular session I see successes that will have a real impact and benefit the people of Louisiana for a very long time. I'm proud of the work we've done from the administration of cooperation we've had from the legislature and so many folks from around the state of Louisiana who have embraced our approach to governing and who helped us to pass these bills and so with that I'm going to make my way over to the table and start signing some bills.